

Women, Infants, and Children program. That is more than 43 percent of babies in the United States. It is unfathomable that a facility this critical to the lives of our Nation's newborns can somehow slip through the cracks.

As of this past weekend, I am glad to see that the Sturgis plant is making formula again, but it could take a couple of months for supply to hit store shelves. Currently, the Nation's current out-of-stock rate is 74 percent. In Tennessee, it is 92 percent. This is indeed a worst-case scenario for parents and their vulnerable infant children.

How did we get here? Let's go through the timeline.

In September of 2019, inspectors found a handful of sanitary issues with the plant in Sturgis but allowed managers to continue operating while they implemented necessary changes.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the FDA conducted its first routine inspection of the Abbott Sturgis plant in 2 years in September of 2021. They found that the issues uncovered in the 2019 surveillance inspection had been resolved. At about the same time, in September 2021, the FDA receives the first complaint that a child was hospitalized with Cronobacter. Meanwhile, the Nation's out-of-stock rate for infant formula rose to 11 percent in November of 2021, when Dr. Robert Califf was nominated to serve as commissioner of the FDA.

December 1, the FDA received a second complaint related to the death of a child. The Centers for Disease Control determined that Cronobacter could have been a contributing factor.

In January of this year, the FDA receives their third complaint of a child hospitalized with Cronobacter, while at the same time The New York Times reports that baby formula shortages are, "worsening throughout the United States."

On January 31, the FDA begins a delayed follow-up inspection of the Abbott Sturgis plant. Thirteen days later, the nationwide out-of-stock rate of infant formula rises to 26 percent. Two days later, on February 15, Dr. Robert Califf is confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the new commissioner of the FDA.

Two days after that, on the commissioner's second day on the job, Abbott announces a voluntary recall and hold of certain powdered infant formulas produced at the Sturgis plant. The same day, the FDA receives a fourth Cronobacter complaint.

Why does this timeline matter? Because President Biden said he wasn't made aware of the issues with the stock of baby formula until late April.

Now just imagine, on your second day on the job, a fire breaks out in your office, and you don't call the President to let him know? I don't understand. I truly don't.

Again, this plant produces one-fifth of the Nation's supply of baby formula. The crisis was foreseeable and extraordinary steps should have been taken to

avoid it. There is no doubt in my mind that the February formula recall followed by the Sturgis plant closure is the primary factor that turned an already increasing problem into a crisis.

There should have been more urgency. It should have been clear to the Biden administration in February that we were going to have a problem. Maybe it was and they just didn't want to tell the President, or maybe he was busy that day. Who knows. I am sure we will find out when Republicans take back the majority and conduct proper oversight of this administration.

Put simply, the FDA and President Biden fumbled the ball for months, and families across this country are paying the price. We cannot afford for this administration to take its eye off the ball again. The President must do better.

□ 1115

#### CELEBRATING THE SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF ENNIS, TEXAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ELLZEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ELLZEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the sesquicentennial celebration of the city of Ennis, Texas, founded on June 8, 1872.

When the railroad was expanded from Houston to St. Louis in 1872, many of the workers found solace and community in what we know today as Ennis.

The railroad workers were drawn to the area's bluebonnets and cotton fields. The appreciation for the natural beauty that surrounds this Texas town still runs deep in the community.

Through the years, Ennis has grown as an agricultural and industrial community, attracting residents and visitors, which has earned it the title of the "Official Bluebonnet City" of our State.

Ennis is known for more than just its bluebonnets. It is also the hosting city of the National Polka Festival. The National Polka Festival began in 1967 and attracts as many as 50,000 people to the town.

Ennis is also home to the Texas Motorplex, where national records have been set and speed milestones have been broken. My family and I have been able to witness some truly remarkable races there.

It is places like these that make Texas proud. The events and venues of Ennis, Texas proudly promote Texas values by providing a family atmosphere and cultivating community outreach.

Strolling along the historic district of Ennis, one can experience plentiful restaurants and shopping options. When entering any store, you are kindly greeted. Families and neighbors welcome each other with open arms. The hospitality of Ennis is seen through these interactions, and it becomes evident why the citizens of Ennis take so much pride in their town.

Ennis has encompassed many of our Texan values, including community and family, and has shown Texas pride for the past 150 years. I am proud and honored to represent the people of Ennis in the Sixth Congressional District of Texas. I look forward to what the next 150 years brings to the great city of Ennis.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 17 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

God of peace and author of our salvation, we pause in prayer to You for the ongoing conflict overwhelming the country of Ukraine and terrorizing its people. After over 100 days of fighting, O Lord, the people cry to You for deliverance.

We pray to You on their behalf as their voices grow weak with exhaustion, their hope dim with each passing hour of unrelenting adversity.

God, You are their refuge and their strength. Do not delay Your salvation from them. You are their ever-present help in time of trouble. Do not deny them the strength of Your abiding spirit.

Though the Earth gives way to the aggression of their foe, give them reason not to fear. Though the seas are ensnared with the adversary's worst intentions, send Your spirit to brood over these waters and disrupt their chaotic plans and bring the order of Your peace.

May Ukraine bear witness to Your promises. God, You are within her, she will not fall. God, You will help her at break of day. Lord Almighty, You are with them. You are their fortress.

We pray with Ukraine by the power of Your sovereign name.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to section 11(a) of House Resolution 188, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PHILLIPS) come